



# The Fort Erie Times

Saturday, May 5, 2012



## Hunger Awareness Week

Food bank needs support this week

**1**



## Back in the ring

Boxing Club revamped and ready to go

**18**



New ball hockey league in Ridgeway



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## Inclusion in the community



On Tuesday, clients and staff from Community Living-Fort Erie hit the streets of Ridgeway for its second annual March for Inclusion. Before the event took place, a flag was also raised at Town Hall. Read the whole story on page 10.

See Page 2



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## Officials meet with OLG

Takeover of slots and track pitched to gaming agency

Kris Dubé  
The Times

Tuesday's meeting between local officials and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) to discuss a local takeover of the Fort Erie Racetrack and Slots was designed to see if there is any interest in allowing it to happen, says Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium chief executive officer Jim Thibert.

The discussion lasted about an hour and a half and was attended by Thibert, mayor Doug Martin, member of provincial parliament Kim Craitor and Economic Development and Tourism Corporation (EDTC) board member Claude Pilato.

A business case has been started, but not finalized at this point because it is the FELRC's position that a better understanding of how receptive the OLG is to the proposal needs to be understood first.

See Page 2

# Councillors get behind Consortium's proposal for slots and track

Kris Dubé  
Fort Erie Times

Hundreds of people gathered at the Fort Erie Racetrack

Slots on Monday evening for a farewell vigil, as the facility was scheduled to close at 6 p.m.

Local politicians, along with patrons and employees of the local gaming venue are hoping

the closure is only temporary if the Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium (FELRC)'s proposed plans to privatize the operation is endorsed by the provincial government and

the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG). Before mayor Doug Martin, member of provincial parliament Kim Craitor and FELRC chief executive officer Jim

Thibert were to meet with OLG officials on Tuesday, many local dignitaries were given an opportunity to show their support for the plan that is being presented.

"We're going to take our plan

and show how we can make the slots profitable and make it work," said Martin on Monday evening.

See Page 23



KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Hundreds of people attended a vigil at the OLG Slots on Monday evening at 6 p.m., when the facility closed its doors and put over 200 employees out of work.

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# Court says 'yes' to Crystal Beach condo project

Kris Dubé  
Fort Erie Times

The Crystal Beach Gateway project is one step closer to becoming a reality.

After a three month wait, the Town of Fort Erie has received a decision from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice on a civil suit launched against the municipality and the Hamilton-based developer, the Molinaro Group.

The lawsuit was filed with claims that contractual agreements between the Town and the developer were done improperly.

The Judge presiding over the case has ruled in favour of the project and has also determined that costs of the litigation should be paid back to the Town and the Molinaro Group.

Justice Haliney ruled that the municipality should receive \$78,524 from the seven appellants and that the developer should be paid back \$57,250.

The plaintiffs have 30 days to appeal the decision.

Mayor Doug Martin said he is pleased with the court's ruling and looks forward to moving ahead without any more obstacles, such as four different appeals that have resulted in a ruling that favoured the project.

"This allows us to move forward with the project and hopefully we can put this behind us and get a shovel in the ground," said Martin.

The controversial 12-storey condominium project has been a heated issue in Greater Fort Erie for the last three years and although Martin has always been a strong proponent of it, he doesn't hold any thing against those who have been con-

**Now, we can address the rest of the issues that are still outstanding and get the project underway."**

— Mayor Doug Martin

timally expressed opposition.

"I understand," said Martin, who compared the fight to kill the condo project to officials trying to save the Fort Erie Racetrack...it's something they believe and deeply care about.

There are still a few matters that need to be handled before ground is broken on the south side of Erie Road in

Crystal Beach, such as a permit from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and a certain percentage of units needing to be sold before any work can be done.

"Now, we can address the rest of the issues that are still outstanding and get the project underway," said Martin.

Acting chief administrative officer Ron Tripp is also satisfied with the decision.

"Not only did the judge find completely in our favour but also awarded costs. This is very positive for the taxpayers of Fort Erie," said Tripp.

In January of last year, 13 applications to the Niagara Municipal Board on this issue, were also dismissed.

Vince Molinaro, president of the Molinaro Group, is pleased with the decision and says promoting the project in Niagara and likely the Greater Toronto Area will be one of the next steps.

"We're looking forward to our next phase and starting our marketing," he said.

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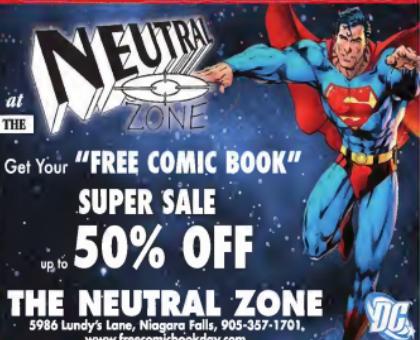
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# Double fatality on Niagara Parkway

QMI Agency

A bouquet of red flowers sat perched atop a destroyed boat dock Monday afternoon.

It marked the spot where the lives of two Fort Erie friends came to a tragic end on the weekend.

Joseph Holiko and Carlos

Mejia were buddies. They worked together at Rich Products in Fort Erie and hung out together on the weekends.

Friday night, they left the Fort Erie home of Carlos' parents and headed to one of the casinos in Niagara Falls.

It was the last time Jorge and Maria Mejia saw their

son alive.

Niagara Regional Police say sometime early Saturday morning, the van and the two were driving in went through the stop sign at the end of Netherby Rd., crossed Niagara River Parkway, crashed through a boat dock and ended up in the Niagara River.

Saturday morning, a pedestrian noticed the destroyed boat ramp and called police. The van was found in the water about 200 metres north of the boat dock with the bodies of Holiko, 39, who had been driving, and Mejia, 30, the passenger, inside.

Jorge Mejia was told of his son's death shortly after the van was pulled out of the river Sunday afternoon.

"It's really hard. He was a good boy," said Mejia. "He enjoyed life. He was going to the beach in the summer."

Jorge and Maria came to Canada from El Salvador as refugees in 1988 with their two sons, Carlos and Oscar.

Carmel Mejia went to Lakeshore Catholic in Port Colborne and started working with his dad at Rich Products a couple of years ago. He moved back in with his parents when he took the job and became friends with Holiko.

Tammy Holiko, of Welland, said her younger brother will be greatly missed.

"He was a wonderful father, he loved his kids, he was a great brother and he will be sadly missed," she said.

Tammy said Joseph went to Eastdale Secondary School and had four children — three boys and a girl.

At Rich Products Monday, employees were told of their coworkers' death by management.

"Everybody was sad because they were both good guys," said Ruben Rodriguez, who has worked at the plant for 23 years.

"They were really nice people to work with and easy to get along with. Everyone would joke with them. We're going to miss them a lot."

On Monday, a barricade remained in place in front of the damaged dock and numerous vehicles pulled in and out of the parking lot to view the scene.

Police say the accident remains under investigation. Anyone with information should call 905-688-4111 ext. 5500.



Authorities block off the scene of where two bodies were discovered last weekend in the Niagara River.

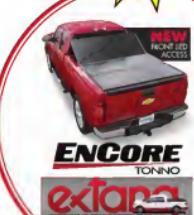
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# opinion page

## The Fort Erie Times

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### our editorial

## Fight for beliefs, but also do something positive

This was a busy news week, one like we haven't seen in a long time.

A vigil at the slots on Monday night, a meeting between the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation and local officials, serious accidents on the weekend and of course the recent court ruling on the lawsuit filed over the Bay Beach issue.

We want to make something clear about the Crystal Beach Gateway project and what it means to the local community.

Some people love the idea and some people think it's the worst proposed project they have ever heard about.

Either way, it needs to be put in the past.

For years, the editor of this publication has expressed his own views on the project and for the most part, spoke favourably about it.

This often resulted in complimentary feedback from supporters and criticism from those who oppose it.

But what is assuring, is that the occasions when comments critics were given, it was done respectfully.

Outside of the local newspaper circuit, there is a war going on and we don't believe a white flag will ever be waved from either side.

Partially because the people involved are too proud to admit their opponents make good points, but mostly because it is their livelihood.

Blogging about local residents and their beliefs has become an everyday, all day affair for a small group of people.

We aren't saying that they are misguided or wrong for doing what they do, because often valid arguments are made from both sides.

It just makes wonder if it will ever stop. What are people going to do when the Bay Beach issue is officially over?

We mean no disrespect to those who fight for what they believe in, but we do suggest you apply your passion for the community to something worthwhile.

Some of the people we are referring to do this and then some... but most don't.

-Kris Duke

## If we want things to change for the better we have to make it happen



**Sarah Ferguson**  
Reporter's Notebook

Maybe I'm young and naive, but I really think if I look at the glass as being half full instead of the glass being half empty, it will make a big difference.

That doom and gloom

feeling has been hanging in the air for far too long in this town.

With the slots closing its doors for the final time this week and more than 200 people out of jobs, things do look grim.

There is no denying that. I went out this week and asked quite a few people what they think this town needs. I got quite a few answers that I thought were interesting.

The one common answer, of course, was jobs.

That answer comes as no surprise to me—I can't even

begin to describe how lucky I am.

Within a month of graduating from college, I managed to find employment.

But I was extremely lucky. I was just in the right place at the right time.

I recently had a conversation with someone who was organizing a fundraiser and he said something that has stuck with me over the last few weeks.

This fellow said to me that if we want good things to happen to this town, we have to make them happen ourselves. More important-

ly, we all have to help each other.

Giving help could mean donating a few canned goods to the local food bank, or it could mean volunteering some time to a good cause.

Taking a few moments to help a friend out in need can make a difference.

Even making a meal for someone who needs it.

The tiniest gesture or a small act of kindness is one way to make a difference in this town.

There's the old cliche I

have often heard so many times.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

Fort Erie has been given a lot of lemons lately, and now it's time to make some lemonade.

If we could turn those lemons into lemonade, life would be pretty sweet.

Often, the words "ghost town" used to describe Fort Erie.

I grew up in Fort Erie and this place will always be my home no matter where else I might choose to live.

It makes me sad to think

that this place where I went to school, met so many people, and held so many memories, could become a ghost town.

I'm not really sure what the answer to the question "What does Fort Erie need?"

I do know that the question will never be answered if we are not willing to make changes—starting with changing our attitudes.

If you have any ideas on how we can make positive changes in Fort Erie, call me at (905) 871-3100 ext. 206 or send me an email at [sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca](mailto:sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca)



## Do You Remember?

Thanks to an anonymous reader, the man in last week's photo has been identified as Gerald Lilley, the co-owner of Dominion Kennels on Dominion Road.

The picture was taken in 1972.

Gerald's partner, Doug

Haley, was a canine Control officer for the Town.

Gerald's canine friend is unidentified, but was likely a stray available for adoption.

This week's photo of a group of ladies has only one clue on the back of the date May 5, 1981.

If you recognize any of their faces, or can tell us why they were gathered together for a group photo?

Please call the museum at 905-894-5322 or e-mail [museum@forterie.on.ca](mailto:museum@forterie.on.ca).

# opinion page

## Thankful for support from local MPP

Dear Editor,

Thank you Kim Craitor (Liberal MPP) for supporting the horsemen and women at our border tracks in Fort Erie, Windsor and Sarnia by delivering the signatures and the petition to the Ontario Legislature.

You are a brave man, standing up to your own government going against party lines.

I know it's a difficult choice to cross the floor not unlike Winston Churchill or Belinda Stronach, but you can always vote down the budget take a clean break and run as an independent like Mr. Casey, the MPP from Nova Scotia, who got re-elected, these are the pollies

ticians we remember.

You will still be able to support the people you represent from your riding, vote from your gut instincts do the right thing and hold your head up.

The horsemen, slot attendants and food and beverage folk are depending on you to vote this budget down and you will definitely get their support.

We need the slots, we need the track, Niagara needs all the help it can get and not welfare lines.

I've personally spoken to breeders who have already cancelled 2012 Thoroughbred matings, the equine industry is in dire straits right now.

Last season, nearly 1,400 mares were covered by over 70 Ontario Sires making this province, 5th in

North America and proudly ahead of Pennsylvania, New York and Texas.

Where will we be next year?

The bleeding has started and we have to put a stop to it.

Sadly, this will also be a similar case for the other racing breeds, Standardbreds and Quarterhorses too.

Let's keep Fort Erie alive.

Go independent Kim and I'll gladly look forward to putting up lawn signs with your slogan 'Craitor the slot saviour' and give you any other help you may need.

Simon Clery

### Take the Fort Erie Times



Selina Ogden recently travelled to Manzanillo, Mexico and she brought the Fort Erie Times along to take a ride on a crocodile.

The

# TIMES Asks

What do you think  
Fort Erie needs?



Rita Beynon



Barney Ogilvie



Rod McDowell



John McCorquodale

"Fort Erie needs more jobs."

"Fort Erie needs to repair its roads."

"Fort Erie needs to become more positive and proactive about attracting business and industry."

"The slots need to come back and so does the Douglas Memorial Hospital."

### What do you think?

E-mail: [editorial@forterietimes.com](mailto:editorial@forterietimes.com) or call 905-871-3100, ext. 207

### Great students



The Fort Erie Optimist club recently showed their appreciation for elementary school students from Fort Erie who have academically excelled in school this year. From left to right are students Shannon Ingman, Bonnie Nadjiwan, Dalton Bird, Kayla Bridges, John Vorstenbosch, Jacob Grant and Shannon Troupe.

**Julia says it's time you joined**

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## Assault with shovel

On Wednesday, an altercation took place in the area of Erie Road and Maplewood Avenue, in Crystal Beach.

A mother walking with her son was overheard yelling and swearing in front of her child. The victims requested the

woman not to yell and swear as their kids were in the area. As a result a physical altercation ensued which resulted in one person being struck with a shovel.

Charged with Assault With a Weapon is 34 year old Danielle Knox.

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The scene of where a man suffered life-threatening injuries in Crescent Park last Saturday, after losing control of his all-terrain vehicle.

## Male suffers injuries on ATV

A 48-year-old Fort Erie man suffered life-threatening injuries Saturday after he lost control of the ATV he was driving and it flipped on top of him.

Police say the man was not wearing a helmet when the accident happened around 5 p.m. on Grandview Rd.,

south of Orchard Ave., in Fort Erie.

The man was airlifted to Hamilton General Hospital, where he remains in critical condition.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Niagara Regional Police collision reconstruction unit at 905-688-4111, ext 5560.

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# Promoting equality of individuals living with disabilities

Kris Dubé  
Fort Erie Times

The month of May annually marks Community Living Month across Ontario. It is a month in which the gifts and talents that people with intellectual challenges bring to the community are celebrated.

The Town of Fort Erie pro-

claimed May Community Living Month and on Tuesday, Community Living Fort Erie raised their flag at Town Hall in celebration of the special time.

In 1957, over 50 years ago, a few parents gathered at this same site Town Hall in response to a newspaper ad placed by a parent of a child with Down's Syndrome.

These parents wanted more for their sons and daughters, so they started their own organization and began by implementing a school program locally for children with intellectual challenges. Due to the dedicated efforts of these founding members Community Living Fort Erie now supports over 200 individuals and their families in

the Greater Fort Erie Area. The May flag raising brought staff and individuals supported together with Mayor Doug Martin to recognize and celebrate the contributions this non-profit charitable organization has made to the community.

Tom Kilner, Community Living Fort Erie's board of di-

rectors president, spoke on the responsibility of the citizens of Fort Erie to promote the development of a healthy inclusive community that recognizes and values the abilities of all its members.

Executive director Maureen Brown says it is the responsibility of local citizens to promote the devel-

opment of a healthy and inclusive community that recognizes and values the abilities of all its members.

"In keeping with our focus of community inclusion, and our belief that our community should be a place where people with intellectual challenges have the opportunity to fully and actively participate in the life of our community, we have adopted statements to promote this commitment," said Brown.

Community Living Fort Erie's vision statement is "an inclusive community that only sees abilities."

It's mission statement is "Community Living - Fort Erie exists to promote inclusion and to ensure people with intellectual challenges have their rights and privileges upheld."

Following the flag raising people walk through the streets of Town Hall on Ridgeway to heighten awareness of the importance of including people with intellectual challenges in all aspects of community life.

See Page 16

## Placing Old Age Security on a Sustainable Path

Canadians are living longer and costs for the Old Age Security (OAS) are rising.

On April 1, 2023 the Government of Canada plans to start raising the age of eligibility for OAS and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from 65 to 67.\*

### What does this mean for you?

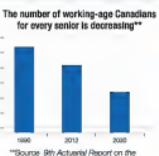
54 or older as of March 31, 2012

You may still obtain OAS/GIS at age 65

53 or younger as of March 31, 2012

The age of eligibility for OAS/GIS will change gradually between 2023 and 2029

Starting in July 2013, Canadians who are eligible for, but not yet receiving OAS will have the flexibility to delay receiving it in exchange for a higher monthly amount at a later date.



The number of working-age Canadians per senior is decreasing, placing additional pressure on the OAS program.

For a free brochure or more information visit [www.ServiceCanada.gc.ca/retirement](http://www.ServiceCanada.gc.ca/retirement) or call 1 800 O-Canada (TTY 1-800-926-9105)

\*Subject to parliamentary approval



### HOW BABIES TAKE THEIR TALKING CLUES

If you're expecting parents to learn that babies not only learn to talk by hearing sounds, but also by lip-reading, which is the next reason to talk to babies face up-front. The critical period during which this important learning process takes place occurs when babies are about 6 months old. At this age, babies begin to distinguish between "voiced" and "devoiced" sounds. During this time, babies carefully study the shape of the speaker's mouth as they attempt to learn how to make the same sounds. By the time babies are 12 months old, they can already produce many of the sounds in their first language. However, if they begin hearing the unfamiliar sounds of a foreign language, they are likely to stick with lip-reading a bit longer.

Hearing loss is just not a part of growing old. If it strikes at any time and at any age, including childhood, for the young, even older children, it can affect their ability to learn, language development, speech development and building the important interactional skills necessary to foster normal social interaction. In addition, if they are born with hearing loss, they are at risk for other health problems such as eye conditions. However, if they begin hearing the unfamiliar sounds of a foreign language, they are likely to stick with lip-reading a bit longer.

At about the age of six months, babies begin to observe movement, which is about the time their brain begins displaying attention-seeking ability (yellow hair automatically turning toward sound).



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# Hunger Awareness Week starts on Monday

Kris Dubé  
Fort Erie Times

Hunger Awareness Week may last from May 7 to 11, but people go without three square meals far more often, says a local food bank.

Barbara Volzke is the manager of Community Outreach Program Erie (COPE) is hoping Greater Fort Erie will do anything it can to help with providing means for local families to put food on the table, especially next week... a time that has been designated by Food Banks Canada to raise awareness about hunger and how many people struggle everyday.

"Many of those people live here in our community of Greater Fort Erie. They might be your neighbour, an acquaintance, a friend, a family member, or even yourself," said Volzke.

Over seven thousand people seek emergency food from the food bank every year, located on Dufferin Street.

Volzke says it is hoped that the shelves of COPE will be filled next week.

Items needed the most include peanut butter, tuna fish, canned vegetables and fruits, lunch snacks and juice boxes for children. Other items the food bank is short on are pasta, sauce, canned pasta, cereal, soup and macaroni and cheese. Fresh items like bread, milk, eggs and margarine are also needed.

Anyone wishing to make a financial donation to COPE will be issued a charitable receipt.

The food bank has been in operation since 1983.

Hours are Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. the phone number to COPE is (905) 871-2526.

On June 14, a pasta dinner will be held at the Italian Canadian Club to benefit COPE. Tickets can be purchased at the door or by stopping by COPE at 32 Dufferin Street.



KRIS DUBÉ, Fort Erie Times

Community Outreach Program Erie manager Barbara Volzke stands behind some of the specific items she hopes the local food bank will receive through donations, during Hunger Awareness Week.

**Zellers**  
**PHARMACY**

Zellers Pharmacy  
200 Garrison Road in Fort Erie  
**Closed as of May 1st, 2012**

Patient and prescription records  
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# Pharmacy at No Frills welcoming new patients

Jesse and Kelly's No Frills will be transitioning prescription files from the Zeller's Pharmacy, which became effective at the beginning of May.

Pharmacist Tejas Shah knows patients will have lots of questions around continuity of their care and he is eager to answer any questions they may have about DRUGstore Pharmacy.

"It's going to be a chal-

lenge but we will make it convenient for our patients," he said.

Tejas and his experienced team offer professional and personalized consultation to meet the needs of the community around the pharmacy.

Loblaw and its pharmacy teams are committed to support Canadians in making healthier lifestyle choices.

The pharmacy on Garrison

and Thompson Roads offers a number of programs and services and is well-equipped to ensure a continued high level of care for Zeller's pharmacy patients. Some of the services and programs offered at this location include free convenience packaging, hypertension assessment and information, a long with co-pay reductions.

The REFILLready program is designed to ensure that customers do not miss an important prescription refill. Loblaw offers customers the option to receive a regular email, phone call or text message to remind them to contact the pharmacy to order their refill.

Free Convenience Packaging is for customers who rely on multiple medications on a daily basis and

the pharmacy will work with customers to organize their medications in clearly labelled pill boxes. This is to ensure that medications are taken correctly and on time.

The Hypertension assessment and information program provides cardiovascular risk assessments which include blood pressure reading and cholesterol level.

Additionally, Sodium

Awareness Lifestyle Tips (SALT) offers customers helpful information including an educational booklet with guidelines for daily sodium intake.

The Co-Pay Reductions service will continue to reduce the co-payment on Ontario Drug Benefit eligible prescriptions by two dollars. This is applicable to eligible Ontario Drug Benefit recipients.



Pharmacist Tejas Shah, middle, with Sarah Walpole, pharmacy assistant and Durgesh Patel, staff pharmacist. The team at the DRUGstore Pharmacy inside Jesse and Kelly's No Frills is ready to serve a number of new patients acquired from Zeller's.

# Here's to fresh starts.



We're proud to welcome Zellers Pharmacy customers.

Due to the closing of the Zellers Pharmacy at 200 Garrison Rd., the DRUGStore Pharmacy™ at Jesse & Kelly's nofrills® will be taking care of all Zellers customers' prescriptions and files from that location effective **Tuesday, May 1st**.

At Jesse & Kelly's nofrills®, we're committed to helping you make healthier choices. Our pharmacy team is ready to answer all your healthcare questions. Drop by any time to talk to us in person.

**We're ready to take care of your pharmacy needs with great services like:**

- REFILLready™ Automatic Prescription Refill Program
- Confidential Medication Consultation
- Healthy Heart Check PLUS!
- Food Allergy Management Assessment
- Diabetes Risk Assessment
- Free Convenience Packaging
- Free Blood Pressure Monitoring



**DRUGStore Pharmacy™**  
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Fort Erie  
905-994-8259

**Pharmacy Hours:**  
Monday to Friday 9 am–9 pm  
Saturday 9 am–6 pm  
Sunday 10 am–6 pm

If you have any questions,  
please call **905-994-8259**  
to speak to our Pharmacy Manager,  
Tejas Shah.

[drugstorepharmacy.ca](http://drugstorepharmacy.ca)



# Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce welcomes a new president

**Dean Demizio**  
says he plans  
to get to know  
business  
owners in the  
community

**Sarah Ferguson**  
The Times

Dean Demizio has always been involved in the community.

It's just something he always believed in doing.

Now, the businessman, who has been working in the insurance business for the last 18 years, has taken on another role in the community.

Demizio is the new Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce president.

As the new president, Demizio has a few goals he would like to achieve during his term. The goals include meeting as many members of the business community as possible.

Whether it's a business that deals with manufacturer-

ing, or it's a small corner-store business, Demizio says he wants to speak with these business owners to get feedback from them.

"I want to know the ups and the downs and what people are thinking. They're the ones that see it all every day."

The president says he also wants to be an active liaison with the local politicians. It's important he is able to meet with and speak with members of the business community. Demizio wants to be able to share information from businesses around town with members of council.

Communication, for Demizio, is important because he says he needs to be able to keep every business owner informed.

Whether it's construction that will affect the operation of a business, or an announcement of an event he is hearing that might draw in new business, Demizio says he wants business owners to be informed.

That's why actively going out in the community and

getting feed back from the business community and acting as a liaison with Town council is important, says Demizio.

Demizio assumed his new role as president in April and before he took over, he made sure he was prepared for it.

"I wasn't nervous. I'm working with a great board of directors and I was able to attend Sudbury Passero a few weeks prior to becoming the president."

With a lot of uncertainty in town and a lot of job loss, Demizio remains positive that there is something special here for businesses.

"I take an attitude where the glass is half full," says Demizio, adding that he thinks "Fort Erie is a diamond in the rough."

The new president says he has a message to businesses out there who are struggling. "There is hope there, be creative and be adaptive."

"Sometimes life throws a few curve balls at you just to see if you are going to swing or not."



**SARAH FERGUSON** Fort Erie Times

Dean Demizio, a local businessman in town, is the new president of the Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce.

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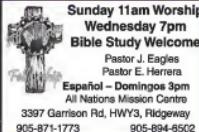
Nothin' but a hound dog



KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Sparky the Fire Dog and 'Fast Eddy' the Roller Skating Elvis getting down on Wednesday, which was McHappy Day, an event that raised over \$3,700 for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Donations and a percentage of sales from the day at McDonald's on Garrison Road helped raise this amount.

## Church Directory



### St. John's Stevensville United Church

14789 Sodan Road, Stevensville, Ontario

#### Invites and Welcomes You to Join Us

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Sunday School: 11 a.m. - noon  
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A/C

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[www.riversidecommunitychurch.ca](http://www.riversidecommunitychurch.ca)

Due to the scheduled power outage on  
Fort Erie on Sunday, May 6, join us:

Saturday Night, May 5  
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Worship, Message, Videos, Kids ministry

### trinitylife

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"WHAT ARE WE ALL ABOUT - BELIEVE"  
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Song Leader: Karl Fretz  
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## Walk or ride to support Multiple Sclerosis research

Walk this Sunday May 6 in Annual Walk For MS begins at 10:30 a.m. at Scuttlebutt restaurant in Stevensville. The walk registration for the 3rd begins at 11 a.m.

A free bbq and live music will follow the walk for participants. For more information, phone 905-382-4000.



CANADIAN  
NIAGARA POWER

### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS

# Planned Power Outage

**Sunday May 6, 2012 – 2:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**

Inclement Weather Alternate Date:

Sunday May 13, 2012- 2:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

**ALL CUSTOMERS  
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will be affected**

This outage is necessary for Canadian Niagara Power Inc. to safely facilitate maintenance on line and substation equipment

Customers will receive a pre-recorded courtesy call in advance of this outage. You may wish to verify your contact information by contacting our offices at the number below.

If you have any questions, please visit our website [www.cnpower.com](http://www.cnpower.com) or call 905.871.0330.

A little drama with your coffee



SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

Staff and students at Ridgeway Crystal Beach High School are inviting the public to attend their coffee house and open mic night on May 9 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$2 or a canned good to be donated to a local church.

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Walk an  
annual  
event

From page 10

This is known as the Walk for Inclusion, the second annual event that is organized by Advocates in Motion, which was formed by representatives and clients from the local non-profit organization.

Terry Sampson, a client of Community Living Fort Erie, is the president of the Advocates in Motion. He says the main purpose of the annual walk through downtown corridors of Greater Fort Erie is essential when it comes to raising awareness about the organization and what it does.

"We want to let people know that people with disabilities have the same rights and freedoms as everyone else in the community."

# Skatepark users need to practice with more etiquette

Parents feel younger kids need to forget about "looking cool' and wear helmets

Kris Dubé  
Fort Erie Times

After a young skateboard user was badly injured last weekend, Nicole and Scott Burnside hope this will be an eye-opener for young people who use the facility, located in front of Town Hall.

Since it opened last year, the couple's son James has been a regular at the skatepark and when he learned about the incident last Saturday, he ran home to tell his parents that he is never going to ride with out his helmet.

Scott and Nicole say James is usually co-operative with their rules that he cannot use the park without proper head protection. They aren't saying that their son is the

only young person who enjoys the skatepark safely, but do feel more people around his age need to realize how important it is to put safety before looking fashionable. They are also praying that the young boy who was hurt last weekend makes a full and speedy recovery.

"It's really sad that so many kids have a disregard for safety," said Scott.

The couple says today, kids find themselves in an entirely different era of recreation and activities to pass time.

"We didn't play in big concrete bowls when we were kids," said Nicole.

When they were young, skateboarding parks were not heard of and the activities they participated in

were nowhere near as intense or dangerous as riding a bike, skateboard or in-line skates at a heavily used facility with many other kids practicing their craft simultaneously.

Their son James is 12-years-old and Scott feels some of the teenagers who are frequent users of the park should act more responsibly and maturely than they do, by watching out for other users, picking up their garbage or not poking fun at others for having a "brand name" helmet.

"When I was young, the older kids led by example," he said.

James said he hopes his fellow users will skate and ride carefully and look past appearances when it comes

to wearing protective headwear.

"It's pretty scary and it's better to be safe than sorry," said the 12-year-old.

Scott and Nicole are also apprentices of the Town of Fort Erie, providing a live video feed of what's going on at the park.

"It's a great feature," said Scott.

Dave O'Connor, 26, has been skateboarding for 15 years and uses the park whenever he gets the opportunity. He also feels some of the younger users need to have more etiquette and regard for others around them.

"Look before you go... make sure all possible,

lines, routes and entrances are clear," said O'Connor.

He says on more than one occasion he has felt like the "bad guy" having to give instruction to some of the younger skaters at the facility, telling them to pick up after themselves because it looks bad but because it can also create obstructions. He says it's up to parents to enforce these unwritten rules.

If a youngster is at an age where these concepts are too advanced to understand, it is then on the parents to supervise, advise and make sure that these issues are being addressed and ingrained into their heads early."

Ward Barrett, 30, has also

been a skateboarder for most of his life. He too feels it's a "general decline in awareness" that causes injuries at skateparks.

"We had Elmer the Safety Elephant tell us to look both ways when we were kids and we don't do that," said Barrett.

Doug Atkins is the Fort Erie Fire Department's public safety officer and he agrees that parents need to play a larger role in enforcing the usage of protective equipment like helmets and elbow pads when participating in extreme sports like skateboarding.

"If the parents don't preach it, the kids aren't going to wear it on their own," said Atkins.

## OPENING WEEKEND • Saturday, May 12

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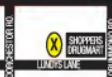
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KRIS DUBÉ  
Fort Erie Times

Bland's Boxing Club has been on hiatus for over a year, but it is making its way back into the ring.

On May 12 and 13 from 12 to 4 p.m., the boxing club, formerly located in Crystal Beach, will be re-opening its doors for registration, in the basement of the Central Avenue United Church.

Bobby Bland, the club's founder was Canada's top boxer five times throughout the late 1970's and 80's

and hopes he can continue to build character with his fighters, many of whom are returning from the old club.

He also wants to recruit new members.

"It's something fresh in the area and I think we're going to get a lot of athletes," said Bland.

He said a boxing club in a small community like Fort Erie is no different than other martial arts schools that are available...it teaches self-defense and promotes only using what you learn inside the ring and

not on the street.

"It has a lot to do with self-esteem and that's the purpose of what we offer," said Bland.

In the past, Bland said his club has been criticized for teaching "hooligans" how to fight, but he wanted to make it clear that he sees that claim as being nowhere near the truth of what he teaches.

"It's a lesson in self-defense."

Sanctioned under Boxing Ontario, Bland says many of his fighters will be entered into competitions

across the province and possibly elsewhere in Canada if they are able to advance that far.

"I want them to have a chance to represent our country," said Bland.

Cardio classes will also be offered, since boxing is more than just throwing on a pair of gloves and swinging at your opponent as hard as you can, he said.

"Boxing is considered the number one conditioning sport," said Bland.

For more information, contact Bland at (289) 228-6846.

KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Bobby Bland stands by the ring, inside his Boxing Club to open on May 14.



KRIS DUBÉ  
Fort Erie Times

There's a new league in town.

Since January, over 40 local young athletes have been hitting the gym at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre for the Ridgeway Ball Hockey League.

There are four teams in the league's spring session that is about halfway through its regular season.



These kids just want to play hockey all the time."

— Fran Mete

be made available for local youth.

Fran Mete and her husband Pat started the league because their son was playing ball hockey before them, but had to be driven to Welland for every game.

Consulting with some other parents in the area, they realized there was interest in starting a local league.

Not only were parents enthusiastic about the idea, but the amount of participation has shown

that it certainly appeals to local young athletes.

"These kids just want to play hockey all the time," said Mete.

The league's goal is to provide professional, affordable, organized community fun for youth.

It fosters sportsmanship and skill development for children, promoting fair and equal play for all.

For more information, visit [www.ridgewayball-hockey.ca](http://www.ridgewayball-hockey.ca) or call (905) 894-2364.

KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Ridgeway Ball Hockey League action, from Wednesday night's game at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre.

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## Cannons home opener this week

The local men's baseball team is ready to get the bats swinging.

On Wednesday May 9, the Fort Erie Cannons will open its season at home against Welland Bullet Proof at 7:30 p.m. at Oaks Park.

The team is hoping local sports fans will come out to cheer on the squad.

## FORT ERIE TENNIS CLUB REGISTRATION.

Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup> and  
Saturday May 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 am - Noon

Registration Will Be Held at Fort Erie Tennis Club on The Corner of Gilmore Rd. and Central Ave. or Register Online at [forteriestennis.ca](http://forteriestennis.ca)

# Mother raises awareness for Lupus, a disease with different faces

**Sarah Ferguson**  
The Times

Lupus is a disease that has many different faces.

And those that suffer from it don't usually appear to be sick at all.

That's what Margaret Moroz, an active volunteer for the Lupus Foundation of Ontario, told members of the Brain Empowerment Team (BET) on Thursday.

BET is a local support group that was created for people dealing with health issues, and their family members, to learn about the brain, neurological impairments and other health issues through books, speakers and discussions.

Moroz shared her story about her son Christopher Smith, who spent more than four months in the hospital fighting for his life.

The mother says she wants to raise awareness for the disease by speaking to high school, college and university students, as well as groups like the BET.

Lupus is an auto-immune disease that affects almost every part of the body because the immune system attacks healthy tissue.

Moroz says that people have a genetic predisposition or environmental factors, such as food, viruses or even chemicals that cause Lupus to appear.

Lupus can also occur when a body is exposed to the ultraviolet light, which damages DNA and it produces this anti-DNA which begins attacking the body.

Moroz was eventually told her son would have to come off of life support early in June 1999.

But a neurosurgeon offered to remove her son's blood clots in his brain, saving his life.

"It was a one in a million chance he would survive," says Moroz.

Moroz believes her son's

disease was caused by sunny weather.

Her story began in March of 1999 when her son visited a friend in Spain and he returned home with a severe rash, swollen and sore joints, a fever and sores in his mouth.

The worried mother took her son to several doctors who misdiagnosed him—which is not uncommon, says Moroz, because the disease has many different symptoms.

During this time, Moroz quit her job as a teacher, and spent the next four months by his side in the hospital, caring for him.

In April, Moroz's son was taken to a Toronto hospital where he suffered 25 seizures and three strokes because of blood clotting and high blood pressure.

Her son's body filled with fluid and he received a procedure to remove his blood clots and he underwent kidney dialysis to get rid of excess fluid.

At this point, Moroz says her son looked "like a wooden barrel or the Michelin man."

He also suffered from severe hallucinations.

"Chris was given immune-suppressing cancer medications," says Moroz, adding that he suffered from pneumonia that caused fluid to fill his lungs.

Moroz was eventually told her son would have to come off of life support early in June 1999.

But a neurosurgeon offered to remove her son's blood clots in his brain, saving his life.

"It was a one in a million chance he would survive," says Moroz.

Her son managed to live through the ordeal and his health eventually improved, but, for every good step, Moroz says her son's health took "two steps back."

To fill the long days and the long nights when she wasn't looking after her son, Moroz wrote in her journal and recorded her son's journey back to health.

"I kept records because I knew I would want to speak about it one day when I could stop crying."

Now, Moroz's son is better, but he is dealing with the disease on a daily basis.

"Chris takes about 30 pills a day, and he can't do many of the things he used to," says Moroz.

Moroz plans to publish her story, along with research and facts about Lupus, because she says, many people don't know much about the disease.

She says her son's case was severe. It was also one of the worst cases Moroz says her son's doctors have ever seen.

For those who want to learn more about Lupus or participate in an upcoming Walk For Lupus event on June 2 in Niagara Falls, they can visit [www.walkforlupus.ca](http://www.walkforlupus.ca) or phone the Lupus Foundation of Ontario's local branch in Ridgeway at 905-894-4611.

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Moroz believes her son's



SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

Margaret Moroz (right), sits with Charlene Heckman, a member of the Brain Empowerment Team, a local support group for individuals and their family members struggling with health issues. Moroz shared the story of her son's battle with Lupus and her journal she record during her son's illness.

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this  
out



The Fort Erie Public Library is hosting Tiny Tales.

The event is a time for children ages two to three and a half years-old. The program offers a morning full of finger rhymes, stories, songs and a simple craft.

The program runs Tuesdays through May 15 at the Centennial branch and Wednesdays through May 16 at the Crystal Ridge branch. 10:30 a.m. at both locations.

Please call to pre-register.

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jwhitfield@rogers.ca

**Lorraine Murphy Memorial  
FOOTBALL & BOWLERS  
Fundraising Walk**  
Saturday, May 12, 10:00a.m.  
Meet at Sneakers, Erie Rd., Crystal Beach  
Come along with us! All money raised goes to the Lorraine Murphy Foundation Fund. For more information call 905-894-1093, Lois 905-894-2988 or Bob 905-871-7531

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**Births****IT'S A BOY!!**

POOLER (Brampton) was delighted to announce the birth of his baby brother, JACKSON STEVEN LUKE, born April 3rd, 2012 at 9:12 a.m. at GINGH, weighing in at 7 lbs. 10 oz. and 19 inches long. Proud parents are Steven and Patricia Jackson is the third grandchild for John and Christine Ballantyne. Waiting and preparing for the new arrival are grandparents Orvel and Virginia Pooley. Fourth great-grandchild for Frank and Shirley Barnett, and first great-grandchild for Steven and the late Patrick Brady. Welcomed with much love from Auntie Endi, Uncle Dave Pooley, Jennifer & Ryan, Meghan, Judy, Kayla, and many others. Welcome to Jack and Kathryn. Watching over Jackson from heaven is Uncle Luke Wilcox. Much thanks to Dr. Deirdre and Dr. Li to all family and friends for your love and support.

**JACKSON**

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appreciation.  
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Saturday, May 12, 2012  
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**Thank You Cards**

The Family of LESLEY WARD would like to thank Angie and her staff at the RUMBLE ON HILL for their benefit they put on for her on Sunday April 29/12. They raised a lot of money for Lesley to help pay her medical bills. Thanks to the band Dealer's Choice and all her friends and co-workers who donated, we appreciate it. Thanks Angie.

11051341

A million times I've needed you  
A million times I've cried,  
If I could have had you, you  
You never would have died.  
Things we feel most deeply  
Are the hardest things to say,  
My love for you, I say to you,  
in a very special way.  
If I could have one lifetime with  
Our love, I would do it again, true,  
I'd pray to God with all my heart  
For yesterday and you.

Memorial Verse #81  
To remember a loved one with this verse  
Call 1-866-541-6757 Today

11051342

**ALBERT, Helmut Joseph** - Passed away on Friday April 27th at the Douglas Memorial Hospital after a brief illness in his 88th year. Loving husband of Elsa for over 59 years. Proud father of Gery (Sharon) of Mississippi, Eva (Bev) Pearce of Rockwood, and Brian (Kathy) of Liverpool. Steven (Kerry) of Collingwood and Tina of Fort Erie. Predeceased by his son Henry in 1974. Loving Opa to Sean (Melissa) McCooey, Katie McCooey, Elaine (Stephen) Andrew, and Daniel (Caitlin) and Connor. Grandfather to Nicolas, Ryan, Gwen, Caelan, Born in Mannheim Germany Helmut and Elsa along with their son Gery emigrated to Canada in 1953 and settled in Fort Erie. Helmut worked at Fieser Aircraft Company and die maker until his retirement. Everyone knew him as a kind and gentle man who loved his family and his adopted home.

**BENNER FUNERAL SERVICES**, 1105 Benner Ave., Fort Erie, Ontario. Arrangements have been made. Private services have been conducted. A graveside committal of Helmut's cremated remains will take place at a future date. If no desired donations in memory of Helmut may be made to the Trinity Lutheran Church Accessibility Fund would be appreciated by the family. "The sun will shine once more and our memories will keep us strong and make us smile knowing he is in GOD'S HANDS."

11051343

There is a sad and sweet remembrance,  
There is memory fond and true;  
There is a token of affection  
And a heartbeat still for you.

Memorial Verse #82  
To remember a loved one with this verse  
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**Deaths**

## Deaths



**FLAGG, Randy Norman** - Randy Flagg, beloved husband of Melana (nee Fazakas) passed away at the London Victorian Hospital on April 29th, 2012 after a motorcycle accident at the age of 50. Proud father of Amber (Nick) of Barrie, Rob of Dunnville, Camaron and Piper at home. Dearly loved grandfather of Owen and Hailey. Cherished son-in-law, Randy will always be remembered by his brothers Bruce (Stacy) and Darren (Janina) and his sister Charyl (Peter) Conick. Also survived by his mother and father-in-law, Jeanne and Brian (the late) and other members of the family. His Aunt Dora Joan (Ron) Lambert, Uncle Vern (Chickie) Baner, nieces, nephews and many friends. Randy loved the Green Bay Packers and the Toronto Maple Leafs, his last wish was to go to a game. Randy also spent fishing at North Bay. He worked with and for a terrific group of people at the Fort's Supermarkets for over 20 years, most recently as the Meat Manager at the Plains Rd. location in Burlington. The family would like to thank the staff at CRIMSON FUNERAL HOME (322 Fennell Ave E, Hamilton) on Tuesday evening from 6-9pm. Funeral Services were held in the Chapel on Wednesday afternoon at 1 pm. In lieu of flowers, a donation to an educational fund established for the children would be appreciated by the family. Details available at the funeral home.

"Till we meet again Hammer"  
Condolances may be made at [www.benniferfuneralservices.com](http://www.benniferfuneralservices.com)

**GIBBS, Frances "Sally"** - Peacefully at the Douglas Manor Hospital on Sunday April 29, 2012 at the age of 89 years. Mrs. Gibbs, beloved wife of Bill for 70 years. Dear mother of Gloria Teeddale (the late Jim, 2008). Loving grandmother of Bill Teeddale and Joann Muraca (Jim) and great grandmother of Austin Murphy. She will also be sadly missed by her sister-in-law Georgia Hawson. Friends called at WILLIAMS FUNERAL HOME, 722 Ridge Road N, Ridgeway on Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. to say their condolences. Sally was laid to rest on Wednesday morning at 11 o'clock at the funeral home. Interment followed at Ridgeway Memorial Cemetery. In memory of Sally, those who wish may make a donation to the Canadian Cancer Society. Sharing of memories, pictures and condolences at [www.williamsfuneralhome.ca](http://www.williamsfuneralhome.ca)

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On This Page

100000

## Deaths

**MELIA, Carlos Alberto** - Suddenly as the result of an automobile accident in Fort Erie on Sunday April 29th, 2012 at the age of 30. Loving son of John and Marie and cherishing brother of Oscar (Marlene) Melia. Also survived by his aunts, uncles his extended family and many wonderful friends. Carlos graduated from Lakeshore Central High and was employed at Rich Products Corp. Elm. BEECHWOOD FUNERAL SERVICES 1105 Bonner Ave Fort Erie entrusted with arrangements. The family received friends on Thursday from 2-4 & 7-9. Funeral services were conducted in the Beechwood Chapel on Friday morning at 11 o'clock. Interment followed in Greenwood Cemetery.

100001



**NICKILO, Eleanor Ena** - Eleanor Nickilo passed away at the Clurion Nursing Home in Stoney Creek on Thursday May 3rd, 2012 in her 94th year. Predeceased by her first husband Jack Art and her second husband Nick Loring. Loving mother of Tom (Suzanne) Art and Michael (Michele) Art. Proud grandmother of Sarah (George) Art, Liam (Kate) Art, Paul (Shauna) Michaels and Kim (Lan) Watkins. Cherished great grandmother of Gwyneth, Gabriel, Alan, Jordanian, Owen, Kaitlyn and William. Funeral Services, 1105 Bonnefond Ave., Fort Erie entrusted with arrangements. The family will receive friends on Monday May 7th from 10 am until the time of the funeral service in the Banner Funeral Chapel at 1:30. A reception will follow. If so desired, donations to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

100002

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100003

## Deaths



**ZIMMERMAN, Cory Christopher** - 1983 to 2012 - I know you couldn't see us but we know you knew we were there, now we can't see you but we are the ones you are watching over us. You are the one that holds us all together, and will always bring us back together. We are all better people because you were in our lives. You are our sun, our star, best friend and hero. We will forever miss you and you are in our hearts. On April 18th 2012 I succumbed by his family. Cory left us before his time. He fought so hard to stay and we are all so proud of his strength. We will be holding a memorial service Sat. May 12th 2012 at his father's farm, 100 Colborne. For more information please email [bree\\_zimmerman@hotmail.com](mailto:bree_zimmerman@hotmail.com) or [zimmypaints@yahoo.com](mailto:zimmypaints@yahoo.com). Cory will be missed by his parents Tim Zimmerman and Linda, his step-parents Dave Faraday and Tracy Zimmerman, his siblings Bre and James, Misty, Byron, Gord and Nicole, Steven, DJ and Kim, his grandmother Hazel Faraday and late grandparents, Ruth and Wally Faraday. Paul and Karen Zimmerman, Art and Helen Rankin, Michael Faraday and his many friends and family. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations to Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation Yaffe Society Fund [www.hamiltonhealth.ca](http://www.hamiltonhealth.ca)

100004

## In memoriam

### In loving memory of Shirley Eberly

A dear Mother, and Nan who left us suddenly last year on May 3, 2011  
It seems so strange that we have to read

And those we love the best

Are just the ones God calls away  
And takes them home to rest.

But every time we think of you, Mom  
We have to say to God, "Please

Have faith and trust in my promise  
You'll meet again some day.

Forever loved and missed  
Pam, Penrie & Dan, Dod, Todd,  
Tami, Steven & Spencer

100005

Safe in the arms of Jesus.  
Safe on His gentle breast.

Memorial Verse #26  
To remember a loved one with this verse  
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100006

## In memoriam



In Memory Of  
N. Richard Graham  
It's been 4 years ago (April 29, 2008) and we still miss you.  
Sadly missed by your wife Mary (Bruce) Maughan, Richard (Dora) and grandchildren.  
You are always in our hearts.

100007



## Willim Sensabaugh

In memory of our dear Father, who passed away 6 years ago on April 23, 2006. You are not forgotten. Father dear, nor ever shall you be as long as life and memory last, we shall remember thee.

Love Always, Doris, Pam and Terry.

100008

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100009



# Slots employees staying positive, hoping local takeover is permitted

From Page 2

The mayor hopes the province will "give us a chance and help us help ourselves," saying that the municipality has faced adversity in the past with closure of the emergency room at Douglas Memorial Hospital and legislation that has hindered the opening up of industrial lands in Port Erie.

"We're going to them with a solution, like we've always done," said Martin.

Ward 1 Coun. Stephen Passero said the slow closure is not something that only concerns him because it's in his jurisdiction as a councillor; it's a reality that he feels will do nothing but hurt the entire municipality.

"This is not just a Ward 1 issue, it's a Town of Fort Erie

issue," said Passero, who is also the past-president of the Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce.

He feels it will be a devastating blow, but he and his colleagues, along with the municipality, will face adversity in the past with closure of the emergency room at Douglas Memorial Hospital and legislation that has hindered the opening up of industrial lands in Port Erie.

"That's what we do in Fort Erie, we don't give up," said Passero.

"There is not a resident or business in this town who will not feel the negative impacts of this closure," he added.

Ward 4 Coun. John Hill thanked the slots employees who would be out of a job after Monday for their 13 years of service and said now is the time to rally behind the Town and the FELRC's takeover plans and petition the Ontario government to consider the option being presented to them.

"We need to get the mes-

sage to Queen's Park, that we're not going to sit back idly and allow this to happen," said Hill.

Ted Mansell is the executive vice-president of the union that represents the slots employees. He used the expression "April showers bring May flowers" as a poignant example of how he hopes will result from the plan of a local takeover.

"Tomorrow morning we're going after these jobs to bring them back," he said.

Ward 2 Coun. Rick Shular said the over 200 slots employees who have been given their walking papers need to be thanked by local residents and shown appreciation during such a tough time.

"They need everyone's support...we're a very caring community," said Shular.

Ward 6 Coun. Paul Collard

also thanked the employees for their time and is hopeful, like his colleagues, that good news will eventually arrive on this issue.

"Hopefully the next time we're together, it's for a ribbon-cutting ceremony," said Collard, who has two sons that were formerly employed at the facility.

Ward 3 Coun. Bob Steckley stressed the importance of making people realize that a handful of politicians standing at a podium to provide their thoughts is not "lip service."

With the plan that has been formulated, he expects everything that can be done will be.

"They're going to fight for you...let's hope the door that opens is the one to the seats," said Steckley.

Before the vigil started, Amie Oravkin could be found walking out of the

slots, after one last test of her luck. She was able to cash out with \$78 more than what she had when arriving, but looking ahead to the future is disappointed to see the slots close its doors.

"I wanted to come down and say goodbye. It's the only thing left in Fort Erie for me and now it's gone. It's pretty sad," said Oravkin.

Mike Baumann has worked in the custodial field at the slots for the last 13 years, since it opened its doors in 1999. He is now considering going to college or university, to potentially open up an entirely different career for himself.

"It's devastating. I thought I was going to be able to retire from here," said Baumann.

Jane Bryan has been a server at the slots, also since the very beginning. She is worried about what the future may hold, but says optimism is the key at this point, as a new plan is presented to the provincial government.

"I think it's great. I'm hopeful," she said.

Debra Legault has worked alongside Bryan for the last 13 years and she agreed that being hopeful is the best mindset to have right now.

"It's a sad day, but we have to stay positive," she said.

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